

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SAJ-01 AID-05 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-07

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FM AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8733

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: ELAB, EAGR, FTRD, SPON, FI, US

SUBJECT: FINNISH INTEREST IN CHAVEZ' FARM WORKERS RISING

1. THE "CAUSE" OF AMERICAN LABOR LEADER CESAR CHAVEZ' UNITED FARM WORKERS (UFW) HAS SO FAR ATTRACTED LITTLE ATTENTION IN FINLAND. FINNISH LABOR LEADERS ARE AWARE OF THE FAR GREATER ACTIVITY OF THEIR SCANDINAVIAN COLLEAGUES ON THE ISSUE, BUT HAVE FELT LITTLE RANK-AND-FILE PRESSURE TO PARTICIPATE IN BOYCOTTS OF NON-UFW LETTUCE OR OTHER ACTIVITY IN SUPPORT OF CHAVEZ. CHILEAN COPPER IMPORTS AND FLAG-OF-CONVENIENCE VESSELS HAVE HITHERTO BEEN MORE ATTRACTIVE SUBJECTS FOR DEMONSTRATIONS OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE UNION SOLIDARITY.

2. TWO RECENT INFLAMMATORY REPORTS ON CHAVEZ AND HIS UNION FILED BY LEFT-WING FREE-LANCE FINNISH CORRESPONDENTS RESIDENT IN THE UNITED STATES COULD INDICATE AN END TO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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FINNISH TRADE UNION PASSIVITY ON THIS SUBJECT, HOWEVER.

THE CORRESPONDENTS IN QUESTION ARE VICTORIA SCHULTZ, WHOSE FILMED TV REPORT WAS AIRED ON THE PRIME-TIME NEWS PROGRAM ABOUT TWO AND A HALF WEEKS AGO, AND ANN-CHARLOTTE VIKLUND WHOSE PIECE IN JUNE 4 SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC NEWS-PAPER DEMARI WAS HEADLINED "GOVERNOR FINALLY CAME TO AID OF CESAR'S UNION." SCHULTZ'S COMMENTARY WAS PARTICULARLY SLANTED. THE LEAD-IN TO THE FILMED REPORT WAS TO THE EFFECT THAT OF ALL THE DESTITUTE AMERICAN WORKERS, FARM AND MIGRANT LABOR HAS HISTORICALLY BEEN THE MOST OPPRESSED.

3. COMMENT: IT IS AN OPEN QUESTION WHETHER FINNISH LABOR WILL RISE TO THE BAIT THAT HAS BEEN OFFERED. THE ISSUE COULD PROVE ATTRACTIVE TO LEFT-WING PARTIES IN COMING PARLIAMENTARY ELECTION CAMPAIGN, HOWEVER. U.S. PROPORTION OF GRAPE AND LETTUCE IMPORTS TO FINLAND IS SMALLER THAN IN SWEDEN AND MAY NOT PROVE TO BE OBJECT OF SERIOUS PRESSURE. IN 1973 LETTUCE IMPORTS FROM U.S. WERE ABOUT \$100,000, OR 20 PERCENT OF TOTAL FINNISH IMPORTS BULK OF WHICH COME FROM NETHERLANDS. U.S. GRAPE EXPORTS TO FINLAND IN 1973 WERE \$350,000 OR 9 PERCENT OF TOTAL FINNISH IMPORTS.
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